

# The Bloomfield Record.

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## EARLY HISTORY OF BLOOMFIELD.

The Earliest Puritan Settlers  
at Watsesson and on  
Second River.

A Sabbath-Morning Picture of the  
Old Church, 1800-51.

(Extracts from the Historical Address, by Rev.  
Charles E. Knox, D. D., at the First  
Præsbyterian Church, Bloomfield, Nov. 10th, 1896.)

The First Settlers.

Within from nine to thirteen years from the first landing in 1666, that is in 1675 and 1679, at least thirty-six persons had taken titles from the mouth of the Second River all along the stream, on Watsesson plain, on Watsesson hill, in the fork of the branches of Second River, on the banks of Second River, at the foot of the mountain and to the top of the mountains near Eagle Rock and northward. There are the names of Ward and Morris and Ball and Harrison and Crane and Pierson and Davis and Dodd and Richards and Baldwin and Blockley and Johnson and Kittrell and Freeman and Lyman and Catlin. The record of these titles in 1675 and 1679 had also been retarded by contentions with proprietors of Elizabethtown so that we may say that the exploration and settlement of this northern half of the colonial tract began with the very beginning at the landing place. Ten years or more later they had crossed this plain, between the Second and Third Rivers, and in 1693 to 1698 thirty-five land owners—half the time the same persons—had patents and surveys up the course and down the course of Third River to Stone House plain, and to the Aquackenonk line in both the northwest and the northeast corners of the original town tract. There are Thomas Davis and Benjamin Baldwin and Matthew Canfield. There is John Morris beginning the Morris Neighborhood. There are Wards and a Wakeman between Stone House Plain and the east branch of Toney's brook. There are a Wheeler and a Freeman north of Stone House brook, and Robt. Young and others to the Aquackenonk line at the mountain; and probably down the Third River, Theophilus Pierson, John Treat, Hans Albert, and two Hollanders, I suppose Buxton Negusson and John Brooklevie all the way down to the mouth of the Third River at the Passaic.

Thomas Davis in 1693 has liberty to set up a saw mill; and the wood-chopper's cabin and the split-log house began to give way to houses of saw lumber; and highways crossed the three forks of Second River to these remotest clearings.

The Stone Houses.

Stone houses began to appear as the new century went on—first probably of field stone and then of stone from the quarry. If chiseled dates can be relied on, the first of which we can be certain are the Van Giesen house towards Stone House plain in 1711, the Anthony Cliff house below Eagle Rock (Williamsville) in 1712, the Abraham Van Giesen house on the east branch of Third River near Canoe swamp, and the Daniel Dodd (Amos Dodd) house now occupied by Mrs. Charles Gilbert, in 1719, and the Franklin Hill school house in 1758. The Moses Farrand house below Watsesson Hill, the Abraham H. Cadmus (Moses Cadmus) house on Montgomery Street, part of the Joseph Davis house opposite the Baptist Church, the Thomas Cadmus mansion where Washington slept, with its slave quarters on the south and its big Dutch oven on the west, the Wakely house on Bellevue Avenue and the Crane houses in Cranetown, represent no doubt a larger number built during that third or half of the century. The names Stone House plain and Stone House brook were in titles in 1695. Possibly there was a solitary house there, although the tradition is that the "stone house" was a shelling rock with a spring.

The Naming of the Town.

It was the congregation and the Presbyterian Society that took the name of Bloomfield. Although the time of the church-town, when or who communicated, could vote was long past, yet religious ideas absorbed the stalwart leaders and dominated civil affairs. The town did not come into existence for sixteen years.

The notices therefore "set up in three of the most public places"—quite likely at the three school houses—were notices for a meeting of the congregation. And at the

meeting they proceeded to choose a name which should unify and identify the whole northern end of Newark, from the great boiling spring to the Aquackenonk line.

In making their choice they passed by Watsessing, a euphonious Indian name—signifying either crooked and descriptive possibly of the elbow of Third River, or Mountain of Stone—which in surveys and patents seem at first confined to the Franklin Hill and to the plain below and had been extending itself northward. They did not consider Cranetown which had come into local use probably before the Revolution as that of the proper settlement of one among several strong families. They thought Newtown, as the little settlement on the road to Second River (past Mr. Oakes house) was called, lacking in qualities. They could not for the Morrisseus call it Morristown, for that name was pre-occupied. They rejected the young men's suggestion of Hopewell. Crab Apple Orchard, colloquial for the locality just above the school house, was too small and too sour.

And so they remanded all these names to final obscurity and raised into prominence the name of a popular and public man rising himself into wide prominence in the State. We can hear the advocacy of Isaac Watts Crane as he set forth the civil and military and patriotic virtues of the man he admired, and see his satisfied look when Bloomfield had "a large majority of the votes." The Trustees immediately incorporated under "the name and title of The Trustees of the Presbyterian Society of Bloomfield." The next day they began the subscription for the church edifice.

A Sunday Congregation Under Pastor Jackson.

The stairways to the gallery were inside the audience room, the steps having a square turn and passing through the gallery floor at the south end. The woodwork was unpainted. The ceiling was a square slope from each side up to a flat parallelogram.

The pews were the old high boxes, facing on one side away from the pulpit, the pulpit itself a goblet-shaped box, mounted on a single pedestal, with a crimson curtain behind and a daring sounding-board overhead. There is no steeple and no bell to summon the people. But the people knew church-time even without a watch or a clock. The full wagon loads drive up. This family and that find their way to their accustomed places. A middle-aged man, square and heavy, cane in hand, with broad-brimmed, straight-crowned Puritan hat comes walking with conscious dignity up the parading ground. He enters the door, proceeds with dignified leisure down the middle aisle, lays his hat and cane on the table and takes his seat in the family pew by yonder illuminated window. That is Joseph Davis. Israel Crane, tall, spare and stooping, with his strong and sober face, has left his open wagon to speak a moment outside the door with General John Dodd, smaller in physique than himself, both of whom find their way to square pews at the right of the pulpit. Captain John Baldwin, yonder large man, in straw hat and shirt sleeves, just making his way to the gallery—always at church—will be ready after meeting, skillful controversialist as he is, to defend the orthodox faith against Hopkinsonism. Deacon Isaac Dodd has come from his house opposite with its well of water, on Sunday noon especially like the well at Bethlehem. Deacons Joseph and Oliver Crane and Major Nathaniel Crane have come in from Cranetown and Oliver Crane and his neighbors from Caldwell. The singers have found their way up the inside stairway. Possibly the player on instruments is tuning his violin, if they have attained such a luxury. The matrons are placing their foot-stoves in position. And now, as the Morrisseus pass his door, Pastor Jackson comes from the Widow Lloyd's house. They enter together the church. He moves down the aisle, ascends the high winding pulpit stairs and takes his seat—and the congregation is ready for their simple and impressive service.

Mr. McKeown, Victoria, on Oct. 9, the assembly, after an all night sitting, passed the second reading of the bill establishing woman suffrage, and "one man, one vote."

Miss Alice Snyder has been appointed assistant to Dr. Mosher, the new dean of the women's department of the University of Michigan.

Clothespins boiled a few minutes once or twice a month and quickly dried become more durable.

The advisability of passing an ordinance compelling the use of broad tires for wagons was brought up for

## TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE.

The regular meeting of the Township Committee was held on Monday night. Chairman Stout called the meeting to order at 8:30 o'clock.

Town Counsel A. S. Badgeley of Montclair, and Assemblyman elect George B. Harrison of Caldwell, were present previous to the meeting and exchanged greetings with the members.

The following bills were approved and ordered paid:

Victor Weden, janitor of Active Hose House, on Election Day, \$6.

James Berry's Sons, burial of dogs and cats, \$3.75.

Ward and Tidener, printing, water and sewer cases, \$100.05.

D. H. Baldwin, chemist, \$45.

Werner and Cogan, repairs of Fire-houses, \$29.40.

J. H. Bonnell & Co., fire department supplies, \$18.

E. S. Greeley & Co., fire department supplies, \$2.40.

Osborne and Marsellus, broken stone, \$20.98.

M. J. Callahan, sidewalk work, \$998.67.

J. J. Mellor, furnishing meals to Police Station, \$3.70.

John Strang, trimming-trees, \$8.25.

A. H. Olmsted, sidewalk work, \$40.50.

W. B. Corby, coal, poor account, \$69.50.

Martin Hummel & Son, coal, poor account, \$29.60.

A. L. Voorhees, incidental expenses, \$2.00.

J. P. Scherff, medicines, poor account, \$4.15.

Mr. Gilbert again called attention to the condition of the crosswalks at the junction of Monroe Place and Spruce street. Last week during the heavy rain storm the scholars of the Liberty Street Primary school were obliged to wade through the water at this point. He urged that something should be done to carry off the water.

Mr. Lawrence suggested that the gutter be opened to Liberty street. This question was referred to the Road Committee with power.

Mr. Fisher reported that the special gutters had been laid.

Mr. Powers stated that he had to cut the gas lamp posts, which the Montclair Gas and Water Company had decided to purchase. A majority of them were taken from Harrison street, Berkeley and Bloomfield Avenues.

A petition had been received from the residents of Mill street, for another incandescent lamp.

Mr. Powers suggested that several new lights be added to the system.

Mr. Lawrence said that another dark spot existed on Bellevue Avenue near Williamson Avenue. The whole matter was referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

A communication was received from City Engineer Crane of Orange relating to the construction of a retaining wall for the Union outlet sewer.

Mr. Lawrence stated that he had endeavored to meet the Orange officials along the line of the sewer, last week, but could not find them. This matter was referred to the Chairman of the Sewer Committee, Mr. Fisher, with power.

Mr. Foster, of the Fire Committee, presented the names of the officers of Phoenix Hose Company, No. 1, and they were approved by the Committee as were the officers of Excelsior Hose Company, No. 8. The resignation of Emil E. Raensch as an active member of Excelsior Hose, No. 3, was accepted.

The application of Charles J. Hauer for membership of Excelsior Hose Company, No. 3, was accepted.

The application for exemption certificates from John R. Marshall of Essex Hook and Ladder Company, and Joseph Welen from Active Hose Company, No. 2, were approved.

The annual inspection and parade of the Fire Department will take place next Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, morning at 10 o'clock, and \$15 was appropriated for music. The department will be reviewed by the Committee on the Park.

Jeweler M. W. Boyle received the contract to regulate the electric clock in the Truck House for one year, for the sum of \$5. Chief Oakes exhibited a smoke protector which costs \$4.50. Mr. Foster recommended the purchase of one of them. The motion was adopted.

The advisability of passing an ordinance compelling the use of broad tires for wagons was brought up for

discussion by Mr. Haskell. Counsel stated that this law referred only to Townships.

Messrs. Fisher and Haskell were appointed a Committee to confer with committees from other towns in the County, at a meeting to be held in East Orange next week.

Clerk Johnson read a petition from the First Ward Board of Regis-try and election, stating that 665 votes had been cast at the last election and that the Ward be divided into two election districts. The matter was referred to the members from the First Ward, Messrs. Stout, Gilbert and Lawrence. At 9:30 P. M. the Committee adjourned.

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## PEOPLE OF THE DAY.

General Fitz Hugh Lee, who has so recently removed such distinguished services to his country as general of the United States to Cuba, is one of the famous Lee family of Virginia. He is a grandson of General Harry Lee, who was a leader in the Revolutionary war.

General Fitz Hugh Lee was born at Clermont, Fairfax county, Va., in 1835 and was graduated from West Point in 1856. He took part in some engage-

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